

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 EB-07 XMB-02 SS-15 NSC-05 PRS-01

COME-00 TRSE-00 OPIC-03 IGA-01 AGR-05 L-02 (ISO) R

DRAFTED BY NEA/PAB:MGJONES/NH/MW

APPROVED BY NEA - MR. ATHERTON

AID/NESA/SA/B:RBECKMAN (DRAFT)

EB/IFD/ODF:BGCROWE (DRAFT)

NEA/PAB:PDCONSTABLE

EXIM:CHAMMOND (INFO)

----- 056589

R 071540Z MAY 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DACCA

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: EFIN, EAID, BD

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR ALI CALLS ON ATHERTON

REF: (A) STATE 86163; (B) STATE 98714; (C) DACCA 2125

1. AMBASSADOR HOSSAIN ALI, ACCOMPANIED BY MINISTER KARIM, CALLED ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON ON MAY 1. HE DELIVERED A REPLY FROM MUJIB (COPY BEING POUCHED) TO PRESIDENT FORD'S MESSAGE DELIVERED TO HIM BY DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY DUBS IN NEW YORK DURING MUJIB'S TRANSIT OF THE U.S. TO THE COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE. ALI ALSO RAISED THE BDG'S CONTINUING STRONG INTEREST IN A VISIT BY PRESIDENT FORD, NOTING A RECENT NEWSWEEK "PERISCOPE" ITEM ON A POSSIBLE PRESIDENTIAL TRIP TO PAKISTAN, INDIA "AND POSSIBLY BANGLADESH." IN CASE HIS COUNTRY WERE NOT INCLUDED, HE NOTED WITH HALF-HEARTED JOVIALITY, "I WOULD LOSE MY JOB." ATHERTON REPLIED THAT THE PRESIDENT'S TRAVEL PLANS WERE NOT FIXED, BUT WE WERE AWARE OF BANGLADESH INTEREST.

2. ALI RAISED QUESTION OF EXIMBANK FINANCING FOR BIMAN'S
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BOEING 707-320C--SEE REF A. KARIM SAID EMBASSY INFORMED

THAT NO NEW LOANS COULD BE APPROVED UNTIL THE EXIMBANK DEBT-DIVISION ISSUE WAS CLEARED UP WITH PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH.

FYI. WE UNDERSTAND EXIM WOULD SEE THIS AS ONLY FIRST STEP AND WOULD REQUIRE SUBSEQUENT THOROUGH REVIEW OF COUNTRY CONDITIONS. END FYI. IT WAS NOTED THAT NEW INITIATIVES WERE CURRENTLY BEING UNDERTAKEN (REF B AND C). ALI STRESSED BDG'S COMMITMENT TO CLEARING AWAY ALL DEBT ISSUES, SAYING THAT EXIM MATTER WAS ONLY PRE-PARTITION LIABILITIES MATTER REMAINING TO BE SETTLED.

3. ALI EXPRESSED SPECIAL APPRECIATION FOR THE 850,000 TONS OF GRAIN MADE AVAILABLE UNDER PL 480 TITLE I THIS YEAR, BUT ASKED THAT AT LEAST 100,000 TONS OF TITLE II GRAIN BE GIVEN TO ENABLE BDG'S FOOD FOR WORK PROGRAM TO BE CONTINUED. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT AID AND CARE PERSONNEL HAD BEEN IN BANGLADESH TO APPRAISE TITLE II REQUIREMENTS, BUT HOPED DECISION COULD BE MADE SOON. HE ALSO REITERATED BDG REQUESTS FOR VEGOIL AND COTTON, PAINTING GRIM PICTURE OF DECLINING TEXTILE INDUSTRY. ATHERTON ASSURED ALI OF CONTINUING USG INTEREST IN ASSISTANCE TO BANGLADESH, NOTING CONTINUING UNCERTAINTIES IN VEGOIL SUPPLY AND DIFFICULTIES IN FORECASTING FY76 LEVELS IN VARIOUS COMMODITIES. KISSINGER

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